Welfare policy for drought hit States

†3976. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any welfare policy for farmers to bail out farmers and agricultural labourers of drought hit States from their plight ; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) The prime responsibility for taking immediate measures in the wake of natural calamities including drought is that of the State Governments concerned. Most of the State Governments have Relief Code or Scarcity Manual to specifically deal with droughts or for handling natural calamities including drought. The Government of India supplements the efforts of the States with financial and logistic support, in accordance with the recommendations of the Finance Commissions for droughts and other natural calamities . Ready availability of funds exists with the States in the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) for taking immediate measures in the wake of natural calamities including drought.

Schemes for soil and water conservation in Goa

3977. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether schemes for soil and water conservation are in force in Goa ;

(b) the datails of essential features of the schemes ;

(c) the details of projects undertaken/implemented under the schemes during the last five years in the State; and

(d) the details of financial assistance granted to the State during that period, year-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) Following watershed development

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

programmes of Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) addressing soil and water conservation aspect are being implemented in the State of Goa.

1. National watershed Development Project in Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA), MoA
2. Integrated Wasteland Development Project (IWDP), MoRD

(b) The National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA) is being implemented in 28 States and two Union Territories, including Goa based on twin concepts of integrated watershed management and sustainable farming systems. The programme has been subsumed under Macro Management of Agriculture (MMA) Scheme since 2000-01 and the funds are allocated by the States from the releases made under MMA for the respective programmes, based on the approved annual work plan. The programme specifically focuses on :

- conservation, development and sustainable management of natural resources,
- enhancement of agricultural production and productivity in a sustainable manner,
- restoration of ecological balance in the degraded and fragile rainfed eco-systems by greening these areas through appropriate mix of trees, shurbs and grasses,
- reducation in regional disparity between irrigated and rainfed areas and
- creation of sustained employment opportunities for the rural community including the landless.

The Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, is being implemented through watershed approach which aims at generation of employment in the rural areas for integrated and sustainable development of land and equitable sharing of the benefits. The project envisages development of wastelands/ degraded lands based on village/micro watershed plans. The IWDP projects are prioritized for sanction in consultation with the State Governments.

(c) and (d) Scheme-wise and year-wise number of projects and funds released/utilised are as below :

Year	NWDPRA		IWDP	
	No. of Watershed Projects	Funds utilised (Rs. in Lakhs)	No. of watershed projects	Funds released (Rs. in Lakhs)
2002-03	27	14.34	-	-
2003-04		41.34	2	82.50
2004-05		97.78		-
2005-06		202.55	2	24.10
2006-07		202.07		-
TOTAL:	27	558.69	4	106.60

Meeting on interest subvention scheme

3978. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a meeting of Chief Ministers of all the State was called in September, 2006 to discuss the Interest Subvention Scheme announced by Central Government;

(b) if so, the details of the discussions held; and

(c) the final outcome of these discussions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) A meeting of Chief Ministers of selected States was held on 8th September, 2006 to discuss the modalities of operationalising the interest subvention scheme for providing crop loans to farmers at 7% rate of interest with an upper limit of Rs. 3 lakh on the principal amount.

(b) Some of the State Governments pointed out the financial difficulties faced by the Cooperative Banks and requested for providing interest subvention by Government on India on the entire lending amount of the